filix-femina, four or five feet in length, yet I have ſeen perfect leaves in fructification not more than nine inches high in the former, and little more than ſix in the latter ſpecies. Hence, in my deſcriptions, when I ſay the leaves are from one to four feet in height, from four to twelve inches, &c. I would be underſtood to mean, that the leaves in both caſes are grown to as great a degree of perfection as the ſituation and ſoil will admit of, that the roots are of a ſufficient age, and that the plants of the ſmaller as well as larger ſize are in complete fructification.

In moiſt and rich ſoils, the Polipodium criſtatum has an upright rib, and attains the height of three or four feet; the firſt pair of ſecond leaves are ſhorter than thoſe next above them; the leaf, for the moſt part of its length is triply pinnated, or, in our own way of deſcribing, divided into ſecond leaves, third leaves, and lobes. Upon dry rocks and banks, the plant is ten or twelve inches high, the rib curves backwards from the inſertion of the firſt pair of the ſecond leaves, which are by much the largeſt, and only this firſt or loweſt pair are triply divided.

For want of paying proper attention to theſe accidental circumſtances, many imaginary ſpecies have been admitted in the liſts of Britiſh ferns. A deſire to multiply the ſpecies of plants ſeems to have prevailed amongſt the Botaniſts of the laſt age. The works of Tournefort, Vaillant, Micheli, Plukenet,